
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2616

Brief Description: Regarding the use of water by public utility districts bordered by the Columbia river in pumped storage projects.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake, Chandler, Van De Wege, Finn, Johnson, Taylor and Takko.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows any public utility district (PUD) bordered by the Columbia River to supply water from a pumped storage generating facility controlled by the PUD to any other entity that sells water to the public.

Hearing Date: 1/25/12

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

A public utility district (PUD) is a type of special purpose district authorized for the purpose of generating and distributing electricity, providing water and sewer services, and providing wholesale telecommunications services. A PUD may operate on a countywide basis or may encompass a smaller jurisdiction. However, most PUDs have jurisdictional boundaries that are coextensive with a county and function as a regional governing body with respect to providing their statutorily authorized services to the public. There are currently 28 operating PUDs in this state, many of which provide a mix of services: 23 provide electrical services; 19 provide water and/or wastewater services; and 13 provide wholesale broadband telecommunications services. Public utility districts are governed by a board of either three or five elected commissioners.

A pumped-storage hydroelectric power plant is a plant which generates electric energy to meet peak load by using water pumped into a storage reservoir during off-peak periods. The method

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

stores energy in the form of water, pumped from a lower elevation reservoir to a higher elevation, and released through the turbines during periods of high electrical demand.

Summary of Bill:

Any PUD bordered by the Columbia River may supply water from a pumped storage generating facility controlled by the PUD to any other entity that sells water to the public. The receiving entity's provision of water to the public may be direct or indirect.

The contracts to implement the sale must cover the entire time the sales will be allowed and be conditioned as seen necessary by the providing PUD. All contracts must be consistent with a resolution passed by the commissioners serving the PUD that was introduced in a public meeting at least 10 days prior to the adoption of the resolution.

A PUD must ensure that adequate provisions have been made for the needs of the PUD prior to selling water from a pumped storage generating facility

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.